COUNCIL OF ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES
CONSEIL DES UNIVERSITÉS DE L'ONTARIO

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Meet the members of Council for 2000-2001

Quality education key to province's future

Investment in education is investment in Ontario say universities

With less than two years remaining to prepare for the significant enrolment increases expected to begin in 2002, Ontario universities are seizing every opportunity to bring the message home to key decision makers. They believe that the future economic well-being of this province will hinge on the quality of university education that is available to students.

The focus of the universities' message is *Access to Excellence*. This 15-page brief sets out the importance of a quality teaching, learning, and research environment and what will be necessary to create that environment.

"We are getting right down to the basics," says Paul Davenport, chair of the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) and President of The University of Western Ontario. "In the knowledge economy, the merits of investment in higher education are abundantly clear. If our province is to be positioned to compete in today's knowledge-based, global economy, the availability of education that is nothing short of excellent must be a top priority."

It's a message that is hard to ignore when we see what is happening all around us and how our lives are being shaped by innovation and discovery. Two-thirds of net job creation over the past decade has taken place in knowledge-intensive, high-technology industries, and these industries now dominate trade and employment growth in Canada.

The emergence of these knowledge-intensive industries calls for high-level skills and innovative thinking. Job statistics bear out this fact. Statistics Canada tells us that jobs for those with university degrees and other postsecondary certificates or diplomas in Ontario increased by close to 30 percent between 1992 and 1997, and that the employment rate for university degree graduates is the highest in the population across all types of educational attainment.

"The evidence clearly illustrates that a highly educated population and a vibrant research community are vital to positioning a jurisdiction to compete in the new economy," says Ian Clark, president of COU. "Beyond this, it is what helps ensure the overall well-being of our society. We need thinkers, we need professionals who are capable of solving highly complex problems, and, as employment rates indicate, we need skills that cross the full range of disciplines that are taught at our universities."

We know that a highly educated population is the key to economic competitiveness and societal well-being and that the surge in student demand for university education is just around the corner. What is also clear is that Ontario universities will require significant provincial grant increases to accommodate the growing numbers of students and provide them with access to quality education.

Over the next decade it is expected that close to 90,000 additional students will seek admission to Ontario universities. A factor that will contribute significantly to the increase is the elimination of Grade 13 as part of Ontario's secondary school reform, which, at its peak effect in 2004-05, could result in some 33,500 students over and above regular enrolment levels.

The provincial government's historic SuperBuild program, which allocated more than $1 billion in capital funding to colleges and universities to help accommodate growing numbers of students, is a significant step toward ensuring access and quality. Over the past several months, universities have been developing and refining plans for growth, and have tabled preliminary institutional plans with the government. SuperBuild has provided one cornerstone for quality and excellence and now the challenge is to maintain that momentum. Topping the list of requirements that must be addressed quickly is the availability of quality faculty.

As student numbers are growing, faculty numbers are declining. Projections indicate that as many as 13,500 faculty will need to be hired at Ontario universities this decade. To appreciate the magnitude of this challenge, consider that these numbers exceed the total number of faculty teaching at Ontario universities today. Record numbers of

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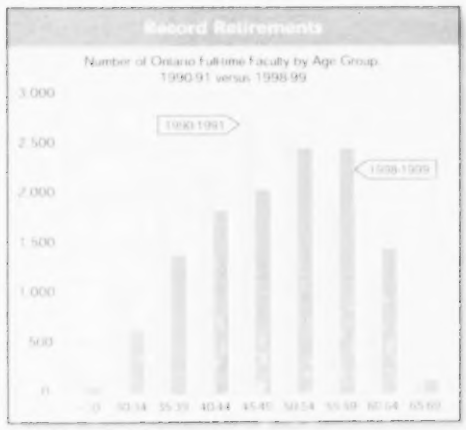
Projected full-time university enrolment in Ontario from demographics, participation rate increases, workplace changes, and secondary school reform.



Quality education key to province's future

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retirements alone will result in the need to recruit 7,500 new faculty. Adding to the difficulty is the fact that this trend is mirrored at universities across North America, resulting in competition from virtually every university in every jurisdiction on this continent.

Significant resources are required to address the challenges. More student demand requires more faculty, academic support, and administrative personnel, as well as expansion of the many services that constitute students learning environment. "We must be in a position to move forward quickly to compete successfully for talented faculty," says Dr. Davenport. "A vibrant culture and tangible support have top drawing power, and are the tools for excellence in teaching and research. This is what will ensure that our graduates will have equal opportunity to excel in the knowledge-based economy."

In recent years, the government has provided new money for targeted initiatives in teaching and research. What is needed now is a major boost in basic operating funds for faculty hiring.

How is the challenge going to be resolved? Where are the funds necessary to cope with the enrolment increases going to be found? COU recognizes that government cannot be solely responsible for the provision of added resources. Universities need to continue to increase their revenue sources and search for operating economies. Students and parents will contribute through tuition that will help offset some of the costs.

The economic argument is indisputable. Tomorrow's opportunities will belong to those jurisdictions whose populations are the most highly educated and skilled. But the case for funding Ontario universities goes far beyond economics. Through their various activities, Ontario universities bring knowledge and discovery to life for the benefit of society at large. They are the heartbeat of the communities in which they reside and to which they contribute in countless ways.

The commitment to operating funding to finance the enrolment expansion will significantly improve the capacity of Ontario universities to contribute toward the goal of making Ontario the best place to live, work, invest, and raise a family.

Ed. note: The *Access to Excellence* brief is available on the COU Web site (www.cou.on.ca).

Investing in Students Task Force reviews administrative efficiencies in Ontario universities, colleges

A new government-appointed task force will study college and university administrative operations across the province with a view to advising government on ways of licensing current and future funding on high-quality education and student service while ensuring accessibility, affordability and accountability in a period of rapid enrolment growth.

Dianne Cunningham, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU), announced the creation of the Investing in Students Task Force on September 19, 2000.

The Task Force will examine best practices in administrative operations and engage in round-table dialogues with stakeholders province-wide. It will also invite proposals from students, institutions, associations, and other organizations on strategies for increasing administrative effectiveness and efficiencies through shared services, administrative collaborations, and other activities. The Task Force is looking for proposals that provide direction and momentum for system-wide change.

The Task Force is composed of five volunteer members appointed by the Minister. **Jalynn H. Bennett** (chair), president, Jalynn H. Bennett & Associates Ltd.; **Jean Bedard**, who practises law at Sotos Associates Barristers and Solicitors in Toronto; **Dr. Roderick D. Fraser**, president, University of Alberta; **Ray Ivany**, president and CEO, Nova Scotia Community College; and **Courtney Pratt**, president and CEO, Hydro One Networks Inc. **Glenna Carr**, CEO, Carr-Gordon Ltd., has been appointed executive project director to support the task force and oversee project groups.

COU has formed nine working groups – co-ordinated by the Council of Senior Administrative Officers (CSAO) and led by its chair, Peter Mercer, Vice President of Administration and Legal Counsel, The University of Western Ontario. The working groups are developing system-wide proposals that address administrative efficiencies in nine key areas: student financial aid administration; facilities planning, maintenance, and utilization; purchasing; human resources; digital library; infrastructure for Web-based services and e-learning; registration; opportunities counselling; and finance and accountability. Proposals will consider four primary criteria: enhancing service quality, avoiding costs, facilitating collaboration, and strengthening accountability and incentive structures.

"It is widely recognized that Ontario is on the verge of the greatest surge in demand for post-secondary education in more than 30 years, with a projected increase of close to 90,000 students seeking admission to Ontario universities by the end of this decade," says Paul Davenport, chair of the Council of Ontario Universities (COU). "There is no doubt that this surge in enrolment will call for significant public investment."

Administrative efficiencies within the university sector are already well documented, he notes, and COU has a wealth of information on hand relevant to the Task Force's mandate to identify shared services and best practices for administrative functions such as information technology, procurement, and data collection.

"All universities have had to continually question established ways of operating and have restructured their faculties and course offerings," says Dr. Davenport. "Through COU and its affiliates, the universities collaborate extensively in areas such as admissions processing, inter-university mail, and joint purchasing where money is being saved for all participants. The restructuring efforts of Ontario universities provide several best practice cases on which the Task Force will be able to draw." Recent initiatives include the Ontario Digital Library initiative, automated transcript processing, student information programs, the Ontario College-University Degree Completion Accord, and a variety of partnerships with industry.

Ian Clark, president of COU, adds that "Ontario universities' expenditures on general administration are the lowest in Canada when expressed as a percentage of total funding, accounting for 5.7 percent of all operating, special purpose, and research dollars as compared to 8.5 percent in the other nine provinces." He notes that similar comparisons with U.S. jurisdictions indicate that the proportion of operating expenses directed toward administrative support in Ontario universities (7.2 percent) is also significantly lower than in major American states (9.1 percent).

Ontario universities look forward to working in partnership with the Task Force to explore opportunities for further efficiencies that benefit students. Dr. Davenport says he is confident that the Task Force's findings will "provide the government and Ontario taxpayers with confidence that substantially increased funding will be well invested in enabling universities to provide quality education to a growing number of students."

The Task Force will submit its final report and recommendations to the Minister by January 31, 2001, before operating grants for postsecondary institutions are announced.

Business leaders share perspectives on university issues

Are business leaders aware of the important issues facing universities in Ontario? Do they have advice for university leaders? These are some of the questions that led to a breakfast seminar on November 1, 2000 at the Toronto Board of Trade, hosted by the Office for Partnerships for Advanced Skills (OPAS).

Business members of the OPAS board invited colleagues to the breakfast session at which Paul Davenport, President of The University of Western Ontario and chair of COU, provided a presentation on the important role of universities in generating new enterprises and wealth, the growing demand for enrolment, and the public funding challenges. Several executive heads including Peter George (McMaster), David Johnston (Waterloo), Claude Lajeunesse (Ryerson), William Leggett (Queen's), Lorna Marsden (York), Bonnie Patterson (Trent), and Robert Rosehart (Wilfrid Laurier) also participated along with the chairs of several university boards.

Business leaders reported being unaware of many of these realities. They urged the universities to step up communications with the business community and with opinion leaders, and to increase reports on successes achieved at the universities.

Many of the more than 50 participants encouraged more events of this type.

Another resounding success for the Ontario Universities' Fair

Fact finding mission: University-bound students learn many strategies to help them in their education planning at this year's Ontario Universities Fair. With 43,000 visitors, the three-day event broke all previous attendance records.

The fourth annual Ontario Universities' Fair drew record-breaking crowds this year with 43,000 people in attendance, topping last year's successful turnout by 5,000 visitors. The Fair was held from September 22 to 24 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre.

The Fair aims to provide students, parents, and other interested individuals with one-stop access to important information and practical tips on education planning. Every Ontario university and the Ontario College of Art & Design was represented, at individual booths that provided both extensive take-away materials and face-to-face contact with university representatives. Admissions, student services, academic, and student representatives were available at each location to convey information and answer questions. University presidents were also on the job at several of the information centres.

"We want to ensure that all who visit the Fair leave with a sense of confidence as they move forward with their planning, and I think that goal is reflected in the full range of resources that come together to make the event such a success," says Paul Davenport, President of The University of Western Ontario and chair of COU. "This event is considered a top priority by every university in the province."

Newsletter aims to help double cohort students plan ahead

The first issue of *The Knowledge Track*, a new COU newsletter aimed at secondary school students, was sent to high schools in early June 2000. The newsletter highlights important developments in today's changing educational landscape in Ontario, with an emphasis on secondary school reform and Ontario universities.

Early reader response shows that parents, teachers, and guidance counsellors have many questions about the impact of secondary school reform on students who intend to pursue university studies.

"A primary objective in publishing *The Knowledge Track* is to provide university-bound students and those who assist them in education planning with the information they need to make the best choices in their secondary school programs of study," says Editor Armier Cadieux. "Because the issues and implications surrounding secondary school reform continue to evolve, we are trying to keep our readers abreast of new developments that are likely to affect them, and to answer their questions with the best information that is available at the time."

The first issue of the newsletter included an article on university admission guidelines under the new Ontario Secondary School program, targeted to Grade 9 students, and answered specific questions from COU correspondents about how universities are preparing for the double cohort. The newsletter will be produced regularly between now and 2003-04, the years during which enrolment demand will be peaking in Ontario universities.

The Knowledge Track is mailed to Ontario high schools and universities and is posted on the Web sites of COU, the Ontario Universities' Application Centre, and individual universities. Reader comments and questions are welcome and may be directed to The Editor, *The Knowledge Track*, at COU's mailing address, fax number, or Web site (see outside back cover).

The next issue will be published early in the new year.

Update on secondary school issues

With the new secondary school curriculum for Grade 11 set for implementation in September 2001, COU's member institutions have devoted considerable effort to advising students of the implications of the new regulations for their choice of senior high school courses, and to establishing admission requirements for graduates of the new program.

As a first response the universities adopted guidelines establishing the general practices that would govern admission policy within the provincial university system. The guidelines were developed on behalf of the universities by the Ontario University Council on Admissions (OUCA) in consultation with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. The guidelines, along with other information about issues related to secondary school reform, were published in a pamphlet entitled *The Knowledge Track*, which was broadly distributed to schools, students, and parents this June.

In June 2000 the Ministry of Education released the policy documents describing the new Grade 11 and Grade 12 courses. Now that this material is available, the universities are developing specific admission regulations based on their analysis of the new courses. The intention is to have the new admission regulations approved by each university's internal governance structures in time to have them in place by the end of this year. Once the prerequisite requirements are established, the information will be distributed widely so that students can make informed choices when they select their Grade 11 courses for September 2001.

Representatives of Ontario universities participated in a review of the Grade 11 and Grade 12 University (U) and University/College (U/C) preparation courses in their draft stage on the assumption that, since these courses were in a destination stream designed to prepare students for study at the university level, members of the academic community should evaluate their appropriateness for that intention. That rationale has been extended, and academics are to be consulted in the development of Course Profiles. The Course Profiles contain detailed information, suggestions, and lists of resources intended to help teachers develop lesson plans and teaching strategies and to enlarge on the rather sketchy descriptions provided in the Course Policy Documents. COU regards the participation of academics in this project as a welcome extension of our earlier involvement with the secondary school curriculum. Academics also hope to participate in the in-service support that teachers will seek as they introduce the new courses.

Proposals for new collaborative nursing programs submitted to Ministry

Universities and colleges submitted their proposals for the establishment of collaborative nursing programs to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) by the September 29, 2000 deadline. The proposal submissions ranged from signed, formal agreements to letters of intent detailing progress that had been made up to that point.

MTCU will be reviewing the proposals and making decisions regarding the allocation of transition funding and the expansion of master's programs as quickly as possible.

The proposal submission process follows on the government's April 2000 announcement of policies for the establishment of collaborative nursing programs, as part of the preparation for the new entry to practice regulation effective January 1, 2005, which will require a baccalaureate degree in nursing for those seeking registration as an RN.

FALL 2000 COUNCIL UPDATES

Institutional Enrolment Plans

The university community has been engaged in a planning exercise over the summer as part of the continuing effort to develop a viable strategy for accommodating the expected increase in student demand arising from the "double cohort" and the "echo of the baby boom." Combined, those factors are expected to lead to an increased requirement for at least 58,000 more university "spaces" by 2005, and as many as 90,000 more university spaces by the end of the decade. Ontario universities were asked to develop their own expansion plans for the next five years, and a preliminary review of the plans indicates that the universities are certainly willing to expand to accommodate the increased demand. It is also clear, however, that such an expansion will require a significant increase in operating funds. The joint COU/Government Working Group on University Capacity will be reviewing the institutional plans as part of its efforts this fall.

Deputy Ministers Attend Executive Heads Roundtable

Executive heads held their first roundtable of the 2000-01 academic year on October 6 and, for the first half of the morning session, were joined by several senior provincial government officials including five deputy ministers. Each provided an update on priorities within his or her respective area. The updates were followed by a general discussion on how universities can work with government for the good of the people and the province.

Working Group on Performance Funding

On March 14, 2000, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) announced that, for the first time, a portion of operating grants to universities will be distributed based on performance. In the 2000-01 academic year, $16.5 million of the approximately $1.7 billion in university operating grants will be tied to three performance indicators: graduation rates, and graduate employment rates after six months and two years. In response to concerns raised by the university community, a joint MTCU/COU Working Group on Performance Funding was established in June 2000. The group has been working since the summer on issues surrounding indicator measurement and links to funding. It is expected that a report will be submitted to the Minister before year-end.

COU Standing Committees on the Status of Women and Equity Issues

The Committee on the Status of Women in Ontario Universities and the Committee on Employment and Educational Equity have been working jointly since the summer to update a 1997 document, *Keeping Equity in the Decision-Making Process*. Members hope the revised document will assist institutions as they plan for expansion and growth over the next decade.

The Standing Committee on the Status of Women has also recently published its biennial statistical report. This report, which tracks women's participation at all levels within the Ontario university system, has been the single most important resource for monitoring changes in the participation of women students, faculty, and administrative staff in Ontario universities.

Summer Institute on Learning Technologies

On August 15 to 17, 2000, the Office for Partnerships for Advanced Skills (OPAS) and its industry partners SGI and IBM held the second Summer Institute on Learning Technologies at the NRC's Virtual Environment Centre on The University of Western Ontario's Research Park. Opened by Dianne Cunningham, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, the event was attended by representatives from all Ontario universities as well as several colleges. Participants were introduced to developing trends and virtual reality applications in learning technologies and had an opportunity to share best practices and experiences.

Polanyi prizes honour fledgling university scholars, researchers

The five recipients of the John Charles Polanyi Prize for the year 2000 were named on October 24 by Dianne Cunningham, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

The Ontario government established the $15,000 awards in 1986 in recognition of the achievement of Dr. John Charles Polanyi of the University of Toronto, who received the 1986 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his work in reaction dynamics. The awards, which parallel five of the six Nobel categories, can be offered in chemistry, economic science, literature, physics, and physiology or medicine, to scholars and researchers planning to continue postdoctoral studies at an Ontario university.

Dr. Polanyi has said that the prize "identifies people as they stand on the edge of the academic nest and prepare to take flight."

This year's recipients are:

- Louis Barriault, University of Ottawa (Chemistry);
- Alexandre Shvartsburg, York University (Chemistry);
- Diego Puga, University of Toronto (Economics);
- Imre Szeman, McMaster University (Literature); and
- Marc Coppolino, University of Toronto (Physiology/Medicine).

The recipients were honoured on November 2, 2000 at a Toronto reception hosted by The Honourable Hilary M. Weston, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

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